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C O N F I D E N T I A L BAGHDAD 000093

SIPDIS

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TAGS: [PGOV](#) [PINR](#) [KDEM](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: BAGHDAD PROVINCIAL COUNCIL (BPC) CHAIRMAN
SUPPORTS PRT INITIATIVE AND LOOKS TO THE FUTURE

Classified By: POLITICAL COUNSELOR ROBERT FORD FOR REASONS
1.4 (B) AND (D).

1. (C) SUMMARY. On January 08 PolOff discussed the new Provincial Reconstruction Team (PRT) initiative with Mu'een Hameed, the new Baghdad Provincial Council (BPC) Chairman. Mu'een supports the initiative and is eager to work with the PRT. The Chairman also commented on the termination of Baghdad Chief of Police (COP) General Abdul Rezak and efforts to improve the BPC. Mu'een is enthusiastic about becoming the new Chairman and looks forward to working closely with Coalition Forces. END SUMMARY.

NEW CHAIRMAN SUPPORTS PRT CONCEPT

2. (C) Mu'een was elected as the new BPC Chairman on December 20 in a special meeting of the BPC. He replaces Mazin Makia who had been BPC Chairman since February. As Deputy Chairman during Mazin's tenure, Mu'een is well versed in the duties of the Chairman. Mu'een expressed his support for the PRT Initiative and his desire for the BPC to work closely with the PRT. The Chairman was impressed with the results achieved by the PST and was certain even greater accomplishments were possible with the PRT. His goal is to involve more BPC members in the Provincial Reconstruction and Development Committee (PRDC) process. Mu'een told PolOff the PRDC needs to initiate more essential service projects for the people and become more efficient in the process.

CHIEF OF POLICE WAS INEFFECTIVE

3. (C) Mu'een explained why the BPC had fired the Baghdad Chief of Police, General Abdal Rezak. The Chairman told PolOff the BPC had given the General one year to improve the security situation but he had failed. Then the BPC conducted an investigation of Abdul's tenure as Police Chief. The committee's report concluded that Abdal Rezak failed to coordinate his duties with the BPC. Abdal Rezak's communication with the council was minimal despite repeated requests for situational updates on security matters. Mu'een said the BPC Security Committee recommended his removal based on the findings of the investigation. He described General Abdal Rezak as incompetent and unaware of corruption within the police force. Mu'een added many BPC Members found him unqualified to occupy the position of Chief of Police. No replacement has been identified though Mu'een said the BPC had suggested the Baghdad Governor, Hussein Al-Tahan (from the SCIRI Islamist party), would be a good temporary replacement. (Comment: In a separate conversation with Hussein on January 7 he indicated he did not want to accept the position as temporary COP. End Comment.)

COUNCIL NEEDS IMPROVEMENT

4. (C) PolOff asked Mu'een if he saw a need to make changes to the BPC. Mu'een said council members need to become more involved in PRDC issues and work done within the various committees of the council. He expressed a desire to delegate many duties previously accomplished by the BPC Chairman. Allowing council members to accept those responsibilities will improve their knowledge and reduce the workload on Mu'een. The Chairman stated increased participation of council members and activation of the PRT Initiative will greatly benefit the citizens of Baghdad. However he added that unless provincial governments receive more attention from Iraq's national leaders, efforts of the BPC and PRT would be wasted.

5. (C) COMMENT: Mu'een, who also is from the SCIRI Islamist party, has hit the deck running and immersed himself in the duties of BPC Chairman. He is demonstrating a desire to work closely with the Embassy and improve governance capacity building within the council. Mu'een recognizes the important roles of the BPC and PRT in improving services for the citizens of Baghdad. However, as he is quick to emphasize, unless the national government of Iraq provides better support to the provincial councils

any efforts to decentralize governmental responsibilities
are doomed to failure. END COMMENT.
SATTERFIELD